



News Release

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CORPS TEAM WINS AWARD FOR MATILIJA DAM PLAN

LOS ANGELES—The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District has won the 2004 Outstanding Planning Achievement Award for its Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study.

The Corps award was presented Wednesday to members of the District's Planning Division and its Matilija Project Delivery Team (PDT) at the annual Senior Leaders Conference in Dallas.

Part of the \$128.5 million project to remove Matilija Dam, near Ojai, Calif., the feasibility study provides a blueprint for one of the largest dam demolitions in U.S. history. Built in 1947 for limited flood control and to store water for farmers, the 190-foot-high dam has trapped so much sediment over the decades that its original uses have been reduced.

As a result, Ventura County residents and officials for years have sought solutions that would maintain local water supply while increasing the steelhead trout population in the Ventura River and replenishing sand on county beaches.

Working with its local sponsor, the Ventura County Watershed Protection District, the Planning team focused on more than 32 miles of habitat along the Ventura River, Matilija Creek and other tributaries, reaching from Los Padres National Forest to the Pacific Ocean. The PDT also included federal and state agencies, local cities and water districts, public and private environmental groups and local citizens.

According to Tom Waters, a leader in the Corps Directorate of Civil Works, Los Angeles District planners formed work groups to address environmental concerns, public outreach, recreation, plan formulation, technical studies and funding opportunities. "The PDT determined that the removal of Matilija Dam was the key to meeting the overall ecosystem restoration objectives of restoration of natural sediment transport and fish passage in this relatively pristine Southern California watershed," he wrote. "Unique and innovative models were developed to address the subsequent release and natural transport of sediments to the downstream 16 miles of Matilija Creek and the Ventura River."

If budget plans proceed as expected, demolition would begin in 2008 and take about three years to finish.

Learn more about the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study by visiting the project's website at <http://www.spl.usace.army.mil/Matilija/matilija.htm>.